

This is a tremendous honor. Thank you to the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, Beyond Nuclear and to the many outstanding peace and justice and environmental groups in the Great Lakes that I've had the honor to work with over the years, working to limit our radioactive "bootprint" in the Great Lakes and globally and put an end to the production of nuclear power, the nuclear bomb and their radioactive wastes that last forever. [Brennain Lloyd of Northwatch calls it the radioactive "bootprint" as footprint does not adequately describe the long-term harm done to the health of our communities and ecosystems.]

In 1979, a friend invited me to a meeting of the Kalamazoo Valley Alliance, a group working to end nuclear power and present safe energy alternatives, but also thankfully focused on stopping the madness of nuclear bomb production.

It is beyond comprehension that 37 years later, the global community including life in our ecosystems, still face the daily threat of nuclear annihilation and ongoing invisible radioactive poisoning of our planet and all living things.

It is also shamefully obscene that our leaders and elected officials are planning to spend one trillion of our U.S. taxpayers dollars to "modernize" our nuclear weapons, which we already have far too many of - and when our communities are struggling to fund human needs - including the education of our youth, badly decaying infrastructure, energy conservation and efficiency, renewable energy, decentralization of electricity, protection of our drinking water and much more.

Like many of you, Dr. Judith Johnsrud dedicated her entire life to stopping the nuclear threat to all humankind and our planet. From personal experience, whenever I sought her expertise on a pressing nuclear problem, she responded with enthusiasm, always affirming the critical importance of working for a nuclear-free planet.

If she was here tonight, Judy Johnsrud would warn you that it is critical that we work to stop the thoughtless rush to transport large quantities of lethal irradiated fuel from commercial nuclear reactors, on our roads, rails, and waterways, which is embodied in some bills in the House and Senate and sneaking in through appropriations - and could start recklessly moving high level radioactive wastes to de facto permanent parking lot dumps - or equally as bad: proposals to bury these wastes into a deep underground dump. At this time, neither of these is an acceptable option. Today there exists no known solutions for care-taking these lethal wastes. There is a pretense that we can care take these dangerous wastes far longer than a million years, with no problems. However, some of these wastes last longer than that! One of the radioactive iodines has a half-life of 15.7 million years, and you must multiply that by 10 or by 20 before it is no longer harmful to the environment. Yet, tellingly, nuclear waste canisters are commonly guaranteed for 100 years. Placing them in a deep hole underground means generations to follow lose access to these most dangerous wastes, once the dump is sealed up or if there is a serious accident underground, such as occurred at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. In Canada, they call it abandonment, once a deep underground dump is sealed and they trust geological barriers to protect the environment essentially forevermore. When there is no viable solution today, why on earth do we continue to produce these wastes?

Where I live in Michigan, we face two deep, underground radioactive waste dumps – one for low and intermediate level radioactive wastes for 20 Ontario reactors, with an entrance that would be less than a mile from Lake Huron. Lake Huron is part of the Great Lakes, which supply drinking water for 40 million people. The second is a high level nuclear waste dump for all of Canada, and highly likely to be built in or near the Great Lakes watershed. While it is good that the Trudeau government is seeking more information, they also are looking for an alternative deep underground dump to abandon these dangerous wastes in.

The groups I work with recommend:

- 1) Stopping production of these wastes since we have no long-term viable solution
- 2) Keeping wastes onsite where possible in hardened on-site storage, guarded, monitored and retrievable
- 3) If it is absolutely necessary to move these wastes, not to move them farther than necessary, for otherwise we merely spread the tremendous risk of extremely long lasting radioactive contamination to all communities and watersheds on transport routes.
- 4) Not only do we face the risks of transport throughout the Great Lakes from radioactive wastes from Canada (and the U.S.), but we now face the incredible risk of the transport of **liquid** highly radioactive wastes on our roads from Chalk River, Ontario in Canada to Savannah River Site in South Carolina. (In Canada, only irradiated fuel is considered high level radioactive wastes, but in the U.S., these wastes would be considered high level nuclear wastes.) This would set a dangerous precedence, never allowed before of transporting highly radioactive **liquid** wastes on U.S. and Canadian roads, with no environmental impact statement or public hearings - and in a cask designed to carry dry radioactive wastes.
- 5) The shipments are completely unnecessary. These wastes are the result of almost two decades of using weapons-grade uranium in the National Research Universal (NRU) reactor at Chalk River, Ontario, (a reactor that produces radioactive isotopes and slated to close in 2018). The wastes contain highly radioactive fission products like strontium 90 and cesium 137. For many years, these liquid wastes were stored in a tank onsite at Chalk River. When the tank filled up, the wastes were downblended (to avoid a proliferation risk) and stored onsite. That could be done today, instead of putting all communities and watersheds on any transport route at risk of a spill or other serious accident, that would be most difficult to clean up and could contaminate those watersheds forever. Worse, the wastes would be used to help prop up the problem-plagued “H” Canyon at Savannah River Site in South Carolina and would be used for reprocessing - a dirty, most dangerous process that contaminates workers and the environment and leads to greater nuclear waste streams, that are far more difficult to clean up.

Once precedent is set, it will be legal to transport **liquid** highly radioactive wastes **anywhere** in the U.S. – without an environmental impact statement or public hearings EVER being held! These shipments are slated to begin this spring! I urge everyone to contact their legislators and call on them to stop these shipments and to mandate a comprehensive environmental review and hold public hearings near potential routes, before transport of these dangerous highly radioactive liquid wastes are allowed. You

can read more here: www.beyondnuclear.org/waste-transportation/2013/4/9/background-links-on-the-shipment-of-liquid-high-level-radioa.html

I also urge everyone to contact their legislators to stop this outrageous and unnecessary trillion dollar giveaway to purportedly “modernize” nuclear weapons in the U.S. and urge them instead to fund human needs in our country and the proper cleanup of the still very contaminated nuclear weapons waste sites.

You all give me the energy to keep on activating, agitating, working to protect our future grandchildren and ecosystems. Every one of you (and many more) are needed to help bring sanity to our government’s priorities. Thank you for the important work you are doing.